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Nov. 13, 2015



BDO USA, LLP, one of the nation's leading professional service organizations, has expanded its San Diego practice through the acquisition of CEA, LLP in Carlsbad, Ca, including the addition of 31 partners and staff.

Founded in 1978 and the largest firm in North County, CEA serves privately-held businesses in various industries, with a concentration of clients in the manufacturing, wholesale distribution, biotech, food and private equity industries. The combination of BDO and CEA, which brings total BDO staff in San Diego to 90,

is subject to customary closing conditions and is expected to be completed on

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“In joining BDO USA, we feel we’ve found a national firm with a very compatible practice philosophy and culture to our own. We have been recognized as one of the best places to work in North County and BDO has received similar recognition at the national level,” said Thomas Applegate, Founding Partner of CEA. “We are a very successful firm and combining with BDO will allow us to amplify what we’ve built. Our clients will have access to a wider array of services, extensive industry experience and the resources of BDO’s extensive global network.”

BDO will maintain both its existing San Diego office in La Jolla and the previous CEA office in Carlsbad. Lee Duran, Assurance Managing Partner for BDO’s existing San Diego office, will maintain that role in the combined San Diego practice and Mark Stepka, a tax partner at CEA, will serve as the Tax Managing Partner. Each of these professionals bring more than 30 years of experience to their expanded roles as managing partners for the combined Greater San Diego practice.

“BDO continues on its blazing trail of merging in firms. This one will be very helpful to BDO in expanding their existing presence in the San Diego market,” said Allan D. Koltin, CEO of [Koltin Consulting Group](#), who advised both firms on the merger. “CEA began the exploration of looking at an upstream merger last March and talked to a combination of firms both in the greater San Diego market as well as those looking to enter the market. Even though CEA was a local firm that were very successful in attracting larger clients and complex projects and felt that being part of a larger platform would provide expanded depth of services to their clients. They also have a talented group of younger partners and staff and saw this as a more effective way to grow the firm going forward.”

- BDO USA has close to 900 staff serving California businesses from offices in Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego, San Francisco and San Jose.
- Over the past three years, BDO has expanded rapidly, entering 20 new cities and adding critical mass in 11 existing markets.

- BDO represents companies ranging from closely-held private businesses to leading

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Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility for six consecutive years.

- BDO has 64 offices and more than 400 independent alliance firm locations around the country.
- BDO USA has been serving clients for more than 100 years since its founding in 1910 (as Seidman & Seidman).
- As an independent member of BDO International Limited, the firm can leverage the resources of more than 1,300 member firm offices in over 150 countries around the world. BDO was named the 2015 Network of the Year by International Accounting Bulletin.

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